



September 17, 2003

The Conservative Viewpoint

Presented by Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN)

The U.S. should remove obstacles to freedom and economic growth in Iraq.

- Although the U.S. has removed the greatest obstacle to freedom and economic prosperity in Iraq—Saddam Hussein—many obstacles still remain.
- There remain obstacles to private property rights, Iraqi ownership of businesses, and foreign investment in Iraq.
- A major barrier to private investment in Iraq is the existence of 192 state-owned enterprises, covering such industries and products as:
 - Hand-woven carpets
 - Cement
 - Vegetable oils
 - Leather
 - Veterinary services
 - Paper
 - Shopping centers
 - Water transportation
 - Internet service
- While Coalition Provisional Authority Administrator Paul Bremer has taken steps to remove some barriers to the creation of a free economy (such as the suspension of tariffs), many of the laws implemented under Saddam Hussein remain in effect. Promoting freedom and economic growth could be accelerated by repealing these laws, including:
 - the boycott of Israel;
 - the prohibition of investment by citizens of non-Arab countries; and
 - the prohibition on non-Iraqis operating as commercial agents.
- The removal of such barriers to private investment and ownership is the key to short- and long-term success in Iraq.

For more information on removing the barriers to liberty and economic prosperity in Iraq, see this RSC Policy Brief:

<http://www.house.gov/burton/RSC/IraqSupplemental.pdf>